agencies provide "soft loan" for reducing the burden on the country's overall balance of payments, and insist on normal rates being charged to the ultimate borrower or project authorities. In addition, the Government of India as the borrower, bears the foreign exchange risk involved in repayment in entirety. All other charges, including commitment and service charges, are also absorbed by the Government of India. Both these factors entail an additional cost of borrowing which is not passed on to the States.

(c) The details of amount of loans given to the Government of Bihar by the Central Government and the rate of interest payable thereon are furnished in Annexure. (*See* Appendix CXLV, Annexure No. 2)

Bank Robberies

136. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA :
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) what is the number of bank robberies in the country during the last three years, year-wise and Statewise and so far during the current year;

(b) what is the amount of money involved in each of these robberies;

(c) what is the amount recovered in each case;

(d) what was the number of persons arrested in each case; and

(e) what steps Government have taken to curb frequent bank robberies in the country ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO) : (a) to (d) Information in respect of the total number of bank robberies/dacoities which took place in various States/Union Territories in the country during the years 1985, 1986, 1987 and 1988 (upto 10-2-88), amount involved therein, amount recovered and number of persons arrested in connection with these robberies/dacoities is given in the Annexure. (*See* Appendix CXLV annexure No. 3)

(e) A High Power Working Group, which was set up in August 1982 under the Chairmanship of the then Finance Secretary had reviewed security arrangements in banks and made suggestions for improvements therein. The Report of the Working Group was sent to all the public sector banks in August 1983 for implementing the recommendations. The Banks have been implementing these recommendations in a phased manner. Since the incidence of bank robberies/dacoities depends, to a considerable extent on the general security environment prevailing in the area, with changes in the security situation in a region, security arrangements in banks have to be reviewed and strengthened to meet the requirements of the situation. Security arrangements in banks have accordingly been reviewed from time to time and improvements made in the security arrangements of branches keeping in view the risk factor involved.

Setting up of housing promotion and Finance Corporation by SBI

137. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the State Bank of India has recently set up a Housing Promotion and Finance Corporation to provide long-term finance to middle and lower income groups for housing on ownership basis; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO) : (a) and (b) The State Bank of India (SBI) has promoted a housing finance institution with the primary objective to provide long term finance at reasonable rate of interest to lower and middle income house holders for purchase, construction or renovation of houses,

The new Corporation, which would be known as Housing Promotion Finance Corporation Pvt. Ltd. (HPFC) will be headquartered in Calcutta and will initially concentrate its activities in the Eastern and North Eastern region of the country. The company would initially raise a capital of Rs. 5 crores. State Bank of India Capital Markets Limited (SBICAP) and Housing Development Finance Corporation (HDFC) have proposed to take up shares of Rs. 1 crore each and balance of Rs 3 crores is proposed to be raised from Life Insurance Corporation (LIC), Unit Trust of India (UTI), General Insurance Corporation of India (GICI) and other well known companies.

Diversification of Activities by the Peerless General Finance and Investment Co. Ltd.

138. DR. RATNAKAR PANDEY : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that the Peerless General Finance and Investment Company management is contemplating to enter into new ventures by diversifying its activities and by utilising the assets of the parent organisation; and

(b) if so, what are the details of the proposed diversification and the reaction of the Central Government to such a move ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO) : (a) and (b) The information is being collected and to the extent available will be laid on the Table of the House.

Impact of new textile policy on textile Industry

139. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that more than 30,000 textile workers recently demonstrated to protest against the failure of the new textile policy and also against large scale smuggling of foreign synthetic textiles;

(b) what is the estimated capacity utilisation of the organised textile sector, powerloom sector and handloom sector at present;

(c) what is the latest figure of the closed textile mills available with Government and the number of workers rendered unemployed due to closure of mills; and

(d) what are the details of the measures undertaken by Government to prevent closure and sickness of textile mills during the last one year ?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA): (a) Yes, Sir. Government are aware of a demonstration by Textile workers in Bombay on 2nd February, 1988.

(b) The capacity utilisation in respect of installed spindles and looms in the organised mill sector during April-October, 1987 is estimated 72 per cent and 61 per cent respectively. In view of decentralised and unorganised nature of the handloom and powerloom sectors, no precise figure of capacity utilisation in these sectors is available.

(c) As on 31-12-87, 133 cotton textile mills involving about 1.71 lakh workers were lying closed in the country.

(d) Important steps taken by Government for ensuring viability of the textile industry include monitoring of sickness, setting up of a Nodal Agency to examine sick textile mills in order to ascertain whether they are viable or not, institutional assistance to sick but potentially viable units, setting up of the Textile Modernisation Fund, Allowing fuller flexibility in the use of fibres, lifting of ban on expansion in the weaving capacity of the mill industry, suspension of cotton export in view of the presently ruling high cotton prices, import of cotton against export of cotton yarn, cotton fabrics and made-up on advance licensing basis.

Evasion of Central Taxes

140. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) what is the estimated evasion of taxes imposed by the Central Government